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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/030,461	04/11/2002	Masahiro Abukawa	5754-00007	8439

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EXAMINER	
AMIRI, NAHID	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3635	

DATE MAILED: 10/07/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/030,461

Applicant(s)

ABUKAWA, MASAHIRO

Examiner

Nahid Amiri

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 03 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4 and 19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 March 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the embodiment of claim 20 having “**the angle made by the line segment connecting contact points of the pair of thin walled members and the inner wall member of the hollow cylindrical body and by the thin walled members constitutes and acute angel**” and “**the line segment connecting the contact points of the each of the pair of thin walled members and the cylindrical body inner wall is perpendicular to the thin wall member**” must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

Claim 4 is objected to because of the following informalities: line 3, phrase “the opening cover” should be rewritten as “one of the opening covers”. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 19 is objected to because of the following informalities: line 11-12, the limitation of “the thin walled members and the cylindrical body inner wall is arranged perpendicular to thin walled members” is been duplicated in this claim. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

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Claims 1, 3-14 and 17-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In regard to claims 1, 17-22, line 6, since applicant using the phrase “adapted to”, therefore it is not clear applicant claiming the bolt and reinforcement bar or not? Also it is not clear how the thin wall of the protrusion 5 could be extending in longitude direction of hollow cylindrical body and having a ridge line 7 sloping down toward the opening cover. Therefore the examiner will examining the claims as best understood.

In regard to claim 3, line 3-4, phrase “ the portion supporting the reinforcing bar”, it is appears applicant claiming a combination. However, the preamble of the claim only claims the subcombination the “joint”.

In regard to claim 6, applicant is defining the distance between the support portion with respect to reinforcement bar. This is improper because the reinforcement bar was not positively claimed. Therefore, applicant should use functional language i.e. “adapted to” or “for”.

In regard to claim 7: applicant does not clarify the location of the hole and it is not clear what is the “vicinity of the point” and it appears the applicant is describing the two line are paralleled and intersect each other. How can two parallel lines intersect?

In regard to claims 8-9 line 2, recites the limitation "the line segment". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

In regard to claims 10-11, line 2, recites the limitation "the angle". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

In regard to claim 12 similar problem that was explained in claim 6.

In regard to claim 14, line 1, recites the limitation "the facing surfaces". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

In regard to Claims 17-20 it is not clear applicant claiming combination or subcombination.

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In regard to claims 20-21, line 10-13, the phrase “the angle made by the line segment connecting contact points of the pair of thin walled members and the inner wall member of the hollow cylindrical body and by the thin walled members constitutes an acute angle” it is very confusing and it is not clear what angle applicant is claiming.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 5,392,582 Abukawa, in view of JP 434318 Yoshioka

In regard to claim 1: Abukawa discloses the claimed invention FIG. 3, column 7, line 35-60, the mortar grouting connector for reinforcing bars including an opening cover C (as marked) and hole 4b at the side wall and having first and second protrusions 5 at the inner peripheral wall which adapted to support the reinforcement bar 6a and 6b, and protrusion having a consist of thin wall extending in longitude direction of the hollow cylinder 6a and 6b and having a ridge line 7 sloping down toward the opening cover C, Abukawa does not disclose the hole is a hole bolt. Yoshioka teaches FIG. 7, the hole 8 is a bolt hole to receive the bolt 9. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention was made to provide the bolt hole to receive the bolt in order to support the reinforcement bar in secure location.

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Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 3-13 and 17-22 are appear drawn to allowable subject matter but final determination will be made after all objections and 112 matters have been corrected.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nahid Amiri whose telephone number is (703) 305-4241 and Fax number is 703-872-9306. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:00-5:30 p.m. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor Carl Friedman can be reached at (703) 308-0839.

na 

September 30, 2003



Carl D. Friedman
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Group 3600